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ABSTRACT

As an aid and reference for administrators, quotes and extracts from 122 documents have been assembled by the author to summarize the arguments over the relative merits of junior high schools as opposed to middle schools. The materials are drawn from a literature search of the ERIC system, the National Diffusion Network, library resources, and journals. Section 1 presents quotes from research studies and opinion pieces giving 32 advantages of junior high schools. Section 2 responds with 31 quotes mentioning the disadvantages of junior high schools. Middle schools' advantages are put forward in 23 quotes in section 3, while the fourth section volleys back with 37 quotes noting the disadvantages of middle schools. The final section sums up the argument with ten lengthier quotes and a chart that contrasts the emphases of middle schools and junior high schools. The references are listed in numbered order at the end of the document. (Author/RW)

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SUMMARY OF READINGS ON
ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF
THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL AND OF THE MIDDLE SCHOOL
(Research and Literature in General)

UTAH STATE OFFICE OF EDUCATION
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DIVISION OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION
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Executive Secretary, Junior High/Middle School Advisory Commission

Prepared by W. Harold Handley

Salt Lake City, Utah
June 1982

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AND
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FOREWORD

Rather than attempting to settle the argument regarding the relative values of the middle school versus the junior high school, this document presents the strengths and weaknesses and points out the possibilities of both. As indicated in the text, Dr. Handley has made a very extensive search of the literature--both research and informed opinion--and has provided a careful summary and handy reference for busy administrators and others interested in this field.

This project was initiated by G. Morris Rowley who served as liaison to the Junior High/Middle School Advisory Committee for several years. Mr. Rowley retired from the Utah State Office of Education in April, 1982. Appreciation is extended to him for his long service in the cause of education in this state and particularly for overseeing the compilation of this document.

Sincere appreciation is also expressed to Dr. W. Harold Handley for the care with which he has completed this work. It is hoped that as adjustments in school offering and practice at this level are contemplated, the literature will be used to guide the thinking and planning and thereby serve the interest of "youth in the middle."

Complete copies of the works quoted are available to interested persons. Reference numbers and page from which quotes are taken appear in parenthesis at the end of each quotation.

Vere A. McHenry
Executive Secretary
Junior High/Middle School Advisory Committee

PREFACE

The following pages contain a summary of readings regarding the "pros and cons" of the junior high school versus the middle school as revealed by educational literature and available research.

The procedures utilized in this review were as follows:

1. An ERIC search was completed with the assistance of Mr. Robert Olson, Utah State Office of Education.
2. An examination was made of all available documents listed in the NDN Network "Educational Programs That Work." Program descriptions of a number of these "innovative" programs--both junior high and middle school--are included in the reference file being furnished as part of this report. These were an outgrowth of contacts with Dr. James of the Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Individualized Schooling, located in Madison, Wisconsin. (Some high school program materials are also included.)
3. A review was made of all masters theses and doctoral dissertations dealing with the assignment at the three higher institutions of learning--Brigham Young University, Provo; University of Utah, Salt Lake City; and Utah State University, Logan, Utah. Copies of pertinent studies are included in the reference file which is part of this report.
4. Major writings dealing with the issues of this report were searched through the catalogue files at the University of Utah Library. Excerpts from some of these documents are included herein.
5. A review was made of the current and bound copies of educational journals and professional literature as found at the University of Utah and Salt Lake Public Libraries, and copies of pertinent articles and reports accompany this report. These are numbered serially to facilitate references as they are found in the body of the report. (The first number in the parentheses refers to the page from which the quotations used have been drawn.)
6. Minor support materials were also found in a bound copy of compilations made by Dr. Reho Thorum. His report is loaned for scanning and is to be returned to this writer for disposition to the owner. Since this is his only copy, it is critically important that the loan be temporary.

The writer claims no credit for authorship of any of the material contained in this report. All materials are extracts and copies of reports and studies found in research documents, current and bound periodicals and journals, and manuals provided by program leaders and education revisionists. Proper credit is tied to the reference system adopted for this report. Any omissions found, if any, are unintentional, as all authors are identified by the articles cited and are included with the materials used in the report.

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I. ADVANTAGES: JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

- Exploration
and
Transition
Facilitated
1. The junior high school structure provides a framework that encourages transition from elementary to secondary studies. "The six years to be devolved to secondary education shall be divided into two periods which may be designated as junior and senior period. In the junior period, emphasis should be placed upon the attempt to help the pupil explore his own aptitudes and make at least provisional choice of the kinds of work to which he shall devote himself." (#1-p.188)
 2. "In the junior high school there should be a gradual introduction of departmental instruction, some choice of subjects under guidance, promotion by subjects, prevocational courses, and a social organization that calls forth initiative and the sense of personal responsibility for the group." (#1-p.188)
 3. "The junior high school would (should) offer a program of studies decidedly greater than the traditional elementary school."
"To the extent that the 'secondarization' of grades seven and eight has in truth resulted in more challenging subject matter, better-qualified teachers, more adequate facilities, enriched student programs, etc., the change has benefited the students." (#1-p.187-188)
 4. Some junior high schools have smoothed the transition by retaining some of the features of the elementary school self-contained classroom by utilizing block-time and core programs (#1-p.189)--an antidote for extreme departmentalization.
 - (a) Allows the teacher to know each pupil as a person.
 - (b) Is a first step toward effective guidance.
- Gradual
Departmental-
ization
- Expanded
Offerings
- Transition
Eased

5. Great efforts have been made to prevent and assure that the student does not "get lost in the shuffle." (#1-p.189)
- Student Home Base (a) Interdisciplinary team teaching.
(b) School-within-a-school organizations.
(c) Carefully developed homeroom guidance programs.
(d) Core programs.
6. Reading instruction is carried through grades seven, eight, and even nine--either as a separate course or as part of an extended language arts program. (#1-p.189)
- Reading
7. Many junior high schools have deemphasized or eliminated interscholastic sports and highly sophisticated social activities. (#1-p.189)
- Downgraded Senior High Influences
8. "It seeks intellectual development through learning experiences, in part organized around broad problems meaningful to the students and in part through study in depth of recognized disciplines." (#1-p.189)
- Learning Experiences
9. "Has provided for some needs of the preadolescent, certainly better than the narrower program of the eight-grade elementary school or of the more regimented one of the high school." (#2-p.16)
- Improved Service
10. The "third continuing characteristic of the junior high school has been its program of exploratory experiences." (#2-p.17) (#12-p.530) (#23-p.194)
- Exploratory Experiences
11. Has been steadfast in providing a "continued program of general education." (#2-p.18)
- General Education

- | | |
|---|--|
| Correlation
With
Elementary | 12. "Practices of the better elementary and junior high schools are coming closer and closer together." (#7-p.81) |
| Teachers the
Key | 13. "Teachers make the school." (#8-p.215) (#30-p.12) |
| Credibility
Maintained | 14. Has maintained its credibility in the society and the profession. The philosophy, purposes, and objectives have from the beginning of this institution been well defined and widely accepted by American educators. (#9-p.140) |
| Curriculum
Recognizes
Youth Needs | 15. "Have developed a broad curriculum which recognizes the interests, needs, and abilities of young adolescents." (#9-p.141) (#9-p.142) |
| Responsive
Curriculum | 16. "The curriculum has been a dynamic one responding to the needs of changing times (#9-p.141) (#9-p.143). Methods and materials have been innovative: core curriculum, team teaching, flexible schedules, continuous progress, instructional media centers, learning resource centers." (#9-p.144) |
| Career
Administrators | 17. "Administrators well prepared, experienced in junior high school education; preference for junior high/middle school administration rather than other administrative and supervisory positions." (#9-p.144) |
| Fairness
in Grading | 18. "Given the impact of grades on the lives of students, their trust in the process must contribute in a significant way to their total valuing of their school experience." (#13-p.343) Junior high teachers are considered to be fair in grading. (#12-p.64) |

Student
Orientation
Transition
Made Easy

19. "The transitional program must fulfill the needs which originate from two separate sources: student/parent and school. The Goodyear Jr. High (Akron, Ohio) is typical of the kind of introductory program utilized by the 'better' junior high school to facilitate this transition." (#14-p.315) Ninety-six percent (96%) surveyed revealed they now felt entirely comfortable with the transition. (#14-p.316) (#16-p.111) (#16-p.124)

Spirit of
Experimentation

20. "The greatest contribution of the junior high school movement has not been a specific but a spirit, the spirit of experimentation it brought to secondary education--to try things out."

Easier H.S.
Discipline W/O
9th Graders

21. "Madon claims that discipline in the upper grades is easier without the ninth graders present." (#19-p.521)

Less Danger
of Too Early
"Growing Up"

22. "There is less danger of imitating adolescents who tend to grow up too rapidly." (#19-p.522) (#30-p.16)

Junior High
Needs 9th
Grade
Leadership

23. "Curtis finds a major disadvantage in removing the ninth grader from the junior high school--the need for a year of leadership since they would 'be held down' in the senior high school. It is felt that ninth graders need a year of this leadership to fulfill some of the psychological needs of adolescents." (#19-p.522)

Junior High
School Has
Adjusted to
Change.
Pubescence
W/O Trauma
or Trepidation

24. The junior high school is "a bridge between elementary and the upper secondary level, and indeed a bridge between childhood and that attenuated, near-adult stage we call adolescence. Within this 'transition school for early adolescence,' a very special environment is to be created in which pubescence can be experienced without trauma or trepidation." (#22-p.40-41) (#30-p.15-16)

Junior High
Premise is
Sound

25. Goals of junior high are theoretically, educationally, sociologically, and psychologically sound. "Any shortcomings are those in human performance and institutional arrangements rather than inherent defects in the idea, which in many schools is faithfully and skillfully practiced." (#22-p.41) (#30-p.6,11-12)

Intellectual
Development
Should Not
Be Postponed

26. "Because more people do need to develop further than ever intellectually, it is all the more important that those who wish to improve junior high school again turn their attention to this central area of the school's responsibility. To return grades seven and eight to an elementary school status is unthinkable. Pupils at this level must have the intellectual resources which a secondary school is better able to provide--teachers prepared in specific subject areas: laboratory, library, studio, shop facilities, and a sufficient concentration of pupils for differentiation in the curriculum consistent with the range of abilities among pupils at this level. When teachers are equally qualified, ninth graders in a junior high school setting appear to achieve as well or better than they do in a four-year high school. Furthermore, a two-grade school lacks stability in that pupils enter one year and leave the next. Although it is better than no middle school at all, it has not been found to be as satisfactory as a three-year unit." (#22-p.41-42)

Junior High
School the
"Spark Plug"
of the Edu-
cational
System

27. "In the American community, the junior high school is the spark plug of the educational system, is better equipped to work with the adolescent psychologically, differs from adjacent areas mainly in emphasis, shares characteristics of both levels--elementary and secondary (#30-p.19). The basic philosophy of junior high (developed in 1962 by American Association of Sec. School Principals) is valid today. (#30-p.10)

Accelerates
Socializ-
ation

28. "Accelerates socialization of children by starting some departmentalization and other practices earlier than that usually done in elementary school." (#30-p.19)

Most Nearly
Parallels
Pubescence

29. "Most studies indicate that the greatest proportion of pupils are pubescent in grades seven, eight, and nine; but this, too, is changing. Should cover not over, not less than three grades nor more than four grades apart." (#30-p.21)

Has Served
Certain
Roles Well

30. "The junior high school has served rather well as a pilot school for educational innovations such as core curriculum and team teaching." (#35-p.14) "Has enjoyed tremendous success in terms of administrative organization." (#35-p.14)

Need Not
Amputate
9th Grade
to Have
Valid Program

31. "One need not amputate the ninth grade to develop programs suitable for young adolescents. Wherever the ninth grade is housed, its program must still articulate with grades above and below. Credits do not have to be counted toward graduation. . . . senior high school can still win . . . games . . . without a farm team. Where junior high school has yielded to senior high school is more often the fault of leadership than the pattern of organization." (#35-p.17)

Junior High
Schools Not
All "Bad"

32. "Throughout the United States, there are many junior high schools that have consistently done an excellent job of meeting the needs of early adolescents. Should these be abolished in favor of middle schools?" (#57-p.41) (#81-p.230) (#86-p.8) (#91-p.6)

II. DISADVANTAGES: JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Connotation
of Title,
"Junior,"
Failed to
Achieve Its
Purpose

1. "Placing grades nine and eight in a 'junior' secondary school has led to the widely deplored tendency for some junior highs to 'ape' the high school in unhealthy ways." (#1-p.188) (#17-p.227) (#17-p.229) (#38-p.1) (#47-p.14)

Pupil-Teacher
Alienation
Via High
Teacher
Specialization

2. "Extreme specialization of subject matter has led some cases to an alienation of the student from his teachers, a genuine loss in guidance at a time of life when he may need it most." (#1-p.188) (#17-p.227)

Overemphasis
On Early Aca-
demic Disci-
plines and
College Prep.
Emphasis

3. "Instruction (has) become highly formal and abstract and college preparation unduly emphasized." (#1-p.188) (#17-p.227) (#36-p.47)

"Aping" H.S.
Cheap Imita-
tion of the
H.S.

4. The tendency to "ape" the high school has been an unhealthy trend. "Indeed, many (junior high schools) are vestibules molded in the same architecture as the high schools to which they open." (#2-p.279) (#17-p.227) (#17-p.229) (#39-p.11) (#38-p.1) (#84-p.17) (#88-p.16) (#91-p.6) (#94-p.288)

Too Early
Intercol-
legiate Com-
petitive
Programs &
Social
Dating, etc.

5. The introduction of "interscholastic athletics, marching bands, formal dances, and precocious dating patterns." (#1-p.188) "U.S. is making its children more precocious at a period when other countries are giving them more and more protection." (#49-p.13) (#89-p.5) (#85-p.17) (#94-p.288) (#93-p.227)

Teachers Inade-
quately Prepared
for This
Age Group

6. Teachers not specifically trained for serving the trans-
escent age group. (#8-p.214) (#46-p.214)

Departmental
Work Too
Suddenly

7. "Departmentalization defeats the efforts of transition."
(#2-p.16) (#17-p.227)

Inadequate
Exploration

8. "Many view the 6-, 9-, 12-, or even 18-week elective courses
in grades 8 and 9 as inadequate exploration." (#2-p.18)

Underesti-
mated Intel-
lectual
Interests
of Youth

9. "The junior high school has unwittingly hastened the dis-
respect for intellectual activity too common among adolescents. Has
the junior high, with its imitation of the high school activity and
social programs, hastened and fixed more firmly the ideals of athletic
prowess (boys) and popularity (girls) over academic brilliance as
reported in Coleman's study, The Adolescent Society?" (#2-p.18)

Inflexible
Curriculum

10. "Lacks a flexible curriculum, permitting and indeed aiding
pupils to progress at different rates and to different depths."
(#2-p.20) (#17-p.220) (#36-p.47)

Lacks
Prestige
& Status

11. "Has lacked proper identification in its own right--lost
status of its own because of its 'junior' classification."
(#2-p.22) (#17-p.227) (#93-p.227)

Teachers
Have Not
Been Trained
To Work With
This Age
Group

12. "The pressures for (higher academic grades) has moved down
from the high school to the junior high school." (#5-p.210) "Many
teachers do not have a thorough understanding of the characteristics
of the 12-, 13-, or 14-year-old student and therefore encounter dif-
ficulties with him." (#5-p.209) (#6-p.192) (#17-p.231) (#45-p.36)
(#46-p.214) (#48-p.21) (#92-p.227)

Dichotomized
Population

Impersonal

Increased
Dropout

13. The "Ins and Outs": The dichotomizing of the youth population--the disparities among our youth are increasing. One factor has to do with the size of our educational units. Although big schools make for some advantages in specialized offerings and specialist teachers, they also lead to impersonal handling. In small units every boy and girl has a role--an active role. As a general rule, throughout the U.S. dropout rates are lowest in small schools and tend to rise with the size of the school." (#6-p.191) (#6-p.193)

Child
Lacks
Security

14. "The typical junior high school program today neglects the fundamental fact that a child needs the security of an environment in which he is well established while he is getting his physical and emotional growth." (#7-p.79)

High Teacher
Loads

15. Teacher loads are excessive. (#7-p.80)

Not Lived
Up to
Promise

16. "The junior high school has not lived up to its promise." (#7-p.81) Departmentalization (below grade nine) should be abandoned. (Ibid) (#17-p.229) (#17-p.231) (#21-p.271) (#35-p.14) (#49-p.28)

"Wattenburg sees no evidence that students who were ninth graders in a 7-8-9 structure differ in any degree from those educated in the framework of an 8-4 plan." (#19-p.522)

Age Groups
Have Little
In Common

17. "The seventh, eighth, and ninth grades are far from appropriate devices for grouping students together." (#8-p.213) (#17-p.230) (#19-p.520)

Teacher
Makes the
School

18. "Teachers make the school." (#8-p.215) Need special preparation for teaching the middle age groups." (#8-p.215)

A Service,
Not A
Product

19. "The pattern of organization of the industrial revolution that produced a division of labor and specialized operations for manufacturing of material things should not necessarily be applied to the design of educational services for early adolescents." (#8-p.216)

Bad Image
Shortage of
Trained
Teachers

20. Being "in the middle" had negative effects: "Filling the junior high school with former senior high teachers who had been demoted, former elementary teachers with more ambition than dedication--who had moved up to junior high school for the financial benefits--or promising young teachers who were waiting for their promotion to senior high school." (#10-p.373) This "lack of status or prestige in junior high school teaching (while receding) has continued to undermine many progressive and innovative programs by contributing to a growing shortage of junior high or middle school teachers." (#10-p.373) (#17-p.227) (#47-p.144) (#93-p.227)

Teacher
Trainees
Prefer
Older
Students

21. "Secondary education students--all expressed strong preference to work with older students." (#10-p.374) Level at which the secondary student did his student teaching appeared to (affect) his later preference for age and level for teaching." (#10-p.373) (#23-p.40) "Good junior high school teachers are even harder to come by than good elementary or senior high school teachers." (#22-p.42) Often teaching "in between" is not satisfying.

Orientation
Programs
Pupil Anxiety

22. "Traditionally, little has been done to deal with the fears and anxieties of the nearly eight million youngsters who annually make the transition from elementary to junior high school." (#14-p.315)

Absence of
Standards;
Policies At
Local and
State Levels

23. "The absence of adequate standards, regulations, and policies at the local and state level hinders proper development of junior high school education." (#17-p.227)

Racial Integration of
Housing

24. N.Y. City system abandoned the 6-3-3 division so that "older (Negro) children from such (segregated) areas could travel to more distant schools. Therefore, in order to get youngsters out of all-Negro schools as early as possible, many civil rights leaders supported a 4-4-4 division with desegregation in both intermediate and high school." (#17-p.228) This trend, begun in the 60s, has not "slowed down," and black separatism (opting for control of the schools) has made great impressions. To the extent that racial integration prevails, "the intermediate school will be more attractive to Negro leadership." (Ibid)

Great Gap
Between 8th
& 9th Grade
Content and
Approaches

25. "Many of them (reorganizers) would be delighted to cede the ninth grade to the high school and thus avoid the continuing pressure of college entrance requirements. A school freed from the burden of the ninth grade could be a unique school for later childhood and the onset of adolescence." (#17-p.229)

The Ninth
Graders--
Where Do
They belong?
An Enigma?

26. "It may be more reasonable to start junior high school with what is now the sixth grade and return the ninth grade to the senior high school program, placing the program entirely within one institution rather than having part of it in junior high school and part in senior high school." (Grambs p.23) State and college requirements have become so many and so rigid as to render many junior high schools virtually bound to the ninth-grade program--a program which requires the ninth grader to earn such subject-matter credits as he may need for college entrance or to satisfy a state requirement. Possibilities

for varied programs in seventh and eighth grades are hedged in scheduling by the need to establish a pattern for the ninth grade. For all practical purposes, we frequently find the ninth grade is attached to our building for rations and quarters only." (#19-p.520, p.522) (#21-p.273)

Senior High
Dominates
Junior High
School
Program

27. "The pressure exerted by the high school actually determines the offerings of the junior high school--the granting of the carnegie unit credit in grade nine is, to a great extent, responsible for this. (#30-p.16) When the ninth grade is included in the high school, the senior institution does not feel compelled to dominate the program of the junior high school." (#30-p.15) (#19-p.520) (#20-p.271) (#21-p.273) (#49-p.30) (#94-p.288)

Curriculum
Issues:
"Creeping"
Changes

28. "It is true that the quality of teaching makes or breaks any program, but a poor curriculum is a millstone around the neck of the best of teachers." (#22-p.42)

Junior High
School Does
Not Span
Early Adoles-
cent Years

29. "The junior high school does not span all years of adolescence. The 11-year-old is still processed by elementary school." (#30-p.10-11-12) Does not reach down to beginnings of adolescence.

A School of
Isolated
Individuals

30. "Organized along department lines teachers met only to discuss subject matter they held in common--fragmentation was an official part of the system. Time to consider students as whole individuals was simply not scheduled into the day." (#76-p.26)

Teacher
Loads

31. "Junior high school teacher overworked, overloaded, unassisted, unprepared." (#91-p.67)

III. ADVANTAGES: MIDDLE SCHOOL

1. "The institution that would serve the adolescent in contemporary society is neither elementary nor secondary in its basic characteristics.

Transition
Is Basic
Aim

(a) It will have the elementary schools' traditional concern for the whole child.

(b) Secondary will be the stress on scholarship and intellectual development.

(c) It will seek to 'blind' both elementary and secondary patterns to serve (the transescent)." (#1-p.189)

Less Restrict-
ed By
Tradition

2. Seeks to "have a program of its own especially adapted to the needs of pre- and early adolescent pupils." (#2-p.16) (#21-p.273)

Inclined to be more innovative. (#36-p.48-49)

Training in
Fundamentals
Extended

3. A more promising approach to higher standards of accomplishment in the fundamentals is probably to be sought in individualized instruction in the grades below the ninth." (#7-p.81)

Socio-
logical,
Psycho-
logical
Influences

4. "Psychologists and anthropologists believed that young people today are maturing earlier physically and psychologically and socially than did their recent counterparts. Today's sixth grader is much like yesterday's seventh grader and requires specialization of both facilities and faculty that ought to be found in the junior high school. Some educators, therefore, advocate recognition of sixth graders' maturity by supporting the 5-3-4 plan and sometimes by even supporting the 4-4-4 plan." (#17-p.228)

Adolescents
Maturing
Earlier

5. "The committee on junior high school education of the NASSP sustains the position of the sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, and (many junior high school) educators that 'today's junior high school student is different from his counterpart of 25 or even 10 years ago.' This earlier maturation produces a 'more precocious and complex' adolescent." (#17-p.229) (#19-p.520-521)

Research
Sustains
Assertions:
Homogeneity
of Age
Groups

6. "Research reports are capped by the authors with the argument that there is more homogeneity among fifth-, sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade students than among seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-grade students." (#17-p.229)

M.S. Focuses on
"needs" of
Youth. Heavy
on Guidance
Not Bound By
College
Entrance Req.
of H.S. Cur-
riculum

7. "The school (middle school) may focus on the needs of the 11-14-year-olds and become a school for 'growing up.' It is their hope that in such a school educational guidance will be emphasized." (#21-p.273) (#49-p.16) "Is student oriented." (#49-p.33-34)

Ninth
Graders
Prefer
Senior H.S.

8. "Students also have thoughts of where they belong--the comments pointed to new pride in their status, their maturity, their appreciation of the chance to be with older students and the ease with which they had adjusted to their new surroundings." (#19-p.520)

Removes 9th
Grader from
a "Poor"
Situation &
Provides Less
Tension
7th & 8th
Graders

9. "There are those who take the position solely as to remove this group of students (ninth graders) from a poor situation and leave the remaining students in junior high school in a better educational setting." (#19-p.521)

"Seventh and eighth graders were relieved of ninth-grade domination." (#19-p.521)

"There is less tension in grades seven and eight with ninth graders gone." (#19-p.521) (#36-p.47)

Administra-
tive: Sr.
H.S. Too
Small to
Operate
Without 9th
Graders

10. "Adding ninth grade to the small senior high school leads to improved high school program offerings." (#19-p.521) By adding ninth grade, an opportunity to offer a variety of courses may be present. Science labs can be confined to the high school and only less-"sophisticated" labs within the middle school. (#19-p.520)

M.S. More
Appropriate
for Sixth
Grader

11. "Mauritz Johnson found that, in the judgment of the teacher, sixth-grade girls resembled seventh and eighth graders more than they did fifth graders, but ninth-grade boys were more like seventh and eighth graders than they were like tenth graders." (#19-p.521) A middle or junior high school seems more appropriate for sixth graders than would be the earlier introduction of ninth graders to the more advanced social atmosphere of the senior high school. (#19-p.521)

Is A "New"
Corporation
and Innova-
tion easily
Incorporated

12. Often more innovative. No sharp subject-matter lines; dependence on textbook begins to fade. Fusion of subject-matter interdisciplinary team teaching, self-pacing, more self-direction, and creative exploration. Student activities "toned down," absence of interscholastic sports, dances (high school type) are part of daily schedule--all are made a "learning" experience. (#21-p.273-274) Often, the presence of elementary teachers on the staff. (#21-p.274) (#30-p.20)

Freedom From
Tradition
Greater
Flexibility

13. A break with "tradition"--"to begin anew; the child, not the program, is important." (#30-p.18-19) (#36-p.47) Interdisciplinary in nature. (#36-p.47) (#36-p.48-49) (#49-p.33)

Grade Place-
ment: Basic
Difference
With Jr. H.S.

14. "Where the middle school does differ with junior high school is on the placement of grades." (#30-p.18) Pressure is reduced. Adapts education to developmental stage of children. "Accelerates

socialization by starting some departmentalization practices earlier than that usually done in elementary school." (#30-p.19)

Grades
6-7-8 Used
for Trans-
ition Period

15. Cuff suggests: "Eighth grade should usually follow departmentalization; seventh grade should use a modified plan by blocking one or two subjects; sixth grade should operate in a one-room, one-teacher, comprehensive plan common to all elementary schools."
(#30-p.20)

Longer Guidance
Period and
Absence of
Interscholastic
Activities

16. Home room guidance is offered to every pupil by the middle school. (#30-p.22) (#36-p.80)

Middle School
Does As Well
As Jr. H.S.
and Better
On Attendance
& Attitude

17. "Mooney showed that middle school children scored as well as or better than junior high school children on attendance, achievement variables (language arts and math skills), self-concept, and attitudes."
(#49-p.31)

In Keeping
the Mood of
the Times:
Change

18. "Change has become the word which allows schools and educators to become 'legitimate' in the wonderful world of education. The need for doing something different is constantly being brought to our attention in a variety of ways. Conferences, college courses, popular and professional literature, and the mass media abound with exhortations to revise, reform, and 'repent!'" (#58-p.46) (#91-p.9)

Accepts Each
Student As
Unique

19. Students, teachers, and parents work together to create, through time, a program that is integral to its middle school clientele.
(#49-p.206-210) (#79-p.100-102)

Utilizes
Diagnostic-
Prescriptive
Teaching

20. "Diagnostic-prescriptive teaching method can thus lead to two benefits: (a) an increase in a student's retained achievement, and (b) the development of a system and materials that lead to an increase in teacher efficiency." (#60-p.13)

Influence of
Elementary
Teaching
Methods

21. "All teachers need to provide the support system needed (in reading) for success. . . . a list of reading skills can be distributed to each content area teacher containing specific, practical activities pertinent to each subject. This will be helpful in helping content-area teachers develop reading skills within their own subject." (#61-p.1 editorial) (#62-p.1-26)

Bridges the
Gap. Child
Centered

22. The lower school (K-4) services the period when children are being introduced to the tools of learning and to the arts of living and working together. The upper school (grades 9-12) should offer a wide range of in-depth studies and opportunities for students to go as far as they are able in the areas that will prepare them for their future. Between these two lies the middle school, which must minister much more individually to each student. Nongraded, IPE programs should be the rule with "teams of teachers concerned with each student (#69-p.9) furnishing needed securing." (#69-p.11) (#72-p.201-205) (#73-p.487-489) (#82-p.63) (#94-p.290)

Not Career
Centered

23. "Does not develop specialists--is not career centered. Curriculum centers around general studies phase, learning skills phase, and personal development phase." (#94-p.290)

IV. DISADVANTAGES: MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Lack of
Qualified
Teachers
1. "Lack of teachers specifically trained to serve this age group." (#4-p.117) "It is imperative that retraining processes be implemented which support the change to child-oriented curriculum decision-making." (#29-p.3)
- No Sound
Guidance
Services
2. "The middle school needs to provide adequate diagnostic and guidance services." (#2-p.19) (#31-p.378)
- Program Not
Structured
For Indiv-
idualization,
Not Measuring
Up to Plan
3. "It (middle school) needs to permit teachers to work individually with children and parents." (#2-p.19) (#40-p.63)
- Bandwagon
Psychology
4. "Many communities have done little more than change the name on the building from junior high to middle school. Too often changes in name have not been accompanied by changes in game." The bandwagon syndrome has been the motivation for changing. (#3-p.67) (#21-p.273)
- "Change"
Psychology
5. "Declining enrollments, building programs, or just plain dissatisfaction with the junior high program." (#3-p.73)
- In-Depth
Research
Lacking
6. "Research evidence--or rather the lack of it--suggests that advocates of the middle school have made a diagnosis based upon opinion rather than fact. Further, they have failed to show how the middle school will function any better than the junior high school. But, perhaps, their most serious failing is that they have demonstrated a reckless pursuit of experimentation at the expense of the real patients in the whole operation--namely, the children of junior high/middle school." (#4-p.109)

Foot-dragging:
Educational
Leaders Fail
to Act On
Research

7. Sexton (see Other Recommended References) has claimed that a major stumbling block in the process of upgrading education has been the predilection of many educators to employ scientific evidence only to the extent that it supports their own views. In this regard, middle school proponents have frequently intercepted any criticism of the junior high school as an endorsement of the middle school. By doing so, they ignore a major principle cited by Johnson (see Other References #4), who stated that "junior high school can be eliminated or altered, but pupils of junior high school will remain; and who will teach them and what they will be taught are the really significant questions." (#4-p.111) (See also #16 below.)

A Change for
Reasons of
Expedience.
Politically
Motivated

8. "The emergence of the middle school is largely a reflection of the awareness on the part of civil rights leaders that the educational process involves more than acquisition of simple intellectual skills. For this reason, they have been unwilling to settle for educational reforms that do not alter the basic social structure of the school system." (#4-p.112) Murphy (see Other References #5) states that "Big cities across the land trying to cope with the pressures of defacto segregation, decrepit slum schools, Negro boycotts, intransigent white parent groups, and deficient budgets see more than a glimmer of hope in the 4-4-4 or 5-3-4 system." It is becoming increasingly evident that what may be the greatest stimulus for the middle school will be the value of the new pattern in providing a possible solution to problems that are primarily social or economic or administrative rather than purely educational." (#4-p.112) (#21-p.272) (#35-p.18) (#35-p.19)

Middle Schools
Differ Little
From Traditional Types
of Schools

9. "There is little doubt that the junior high has failed to fulfill its original function. On the other hand, the middle school has provided no concrete evidence that it will afford adolescents a significantly improved education. Indeed, it is impossible to distinguish existing middle schools from junior high schools." (#4-p.112) (#29-p.1-2)

Lack of
Leadership

10. "Middle school principals, on the whole, are (not) well trained for their roles (as middle school leaders). (#4-p.116) (#33-p.242) (#36-p.47)

Failure to
Prepare Staff.
No Certif.
Yet

11. Middle schools have not yet attained parity legally nor within the profession. Until these become a reality, "all the curricular and instructional ideas regarding youngsters in the middle years will go for naught." "The colleges of education are, in reality, perpetuating incompetence in middle education" through lack of commitment and initiative to prepare professional leaders and teachers of this age group. (#4-p.117) (#17-p.229) (#37-p.84) (#98-p.14, 16) (#99-p.13-16)

Dropout Rate
During 10-
14 Years

12. Large school units tend to lead to higher dropout rate and impersonalization of schooling (see Junior High Disadvantages #13 for reference source).

Programs Not
Insured Success:
Not Yet fully
Committed to
Transescent:
Initiated for
"Wrong" Reasons!

13. "The middle school will go the way of the junior high school-- a path toward which it seems already to be moving, unless those involved in reorganization plan and prepare carefully, designing the program on the basis of the nature of the transescent learner." (#19-p.522)

"Wattenburg recognizes that creation of the middle school offers some new opportunities but feels it is wasted effort unless administrative arrangement gives rise to new programs. (Ibid)

(#35-p.12) (#35-p.16)

Grade Level Groups Still In State of Flux

14. "Indecision yet prevails on what grade levels should be grouped for the education of the transescent ages. Began with grades 5-8 and ranges from 6-8, 7-8, 7-9, 5-8, 6-7, 6-9!" (Indiana survey [1971] covering 94 schools.) One point of agreement: "The typical 'middle school' is the absence of the ninth grade!" (#21-p.73)

No Significant Differences Between M.S. & Jr. H.S. M.S. Not Meeting Goals

15. "No significant difference between middle school and junior high school in terms of understanding the philosophical purposes, goals, and actual practices of middle school."

"Middle School failing to meet goals."

"Emphasis on content has contributed to development of teachers who concentrate on subject matter to detriment of human beings who are supposed to learn the content." (#29-p.1-2) "Middle school must change from content to child emphasis. (#29-p.2) (#35-p.16) (#38-p.3) (#40-p.63)

M.S. Teachers Not Utilizing Available Research To Facilitate Teaching

16. "If serious efforts can be made to aid teachers in developing skills in utilizing the available sources, perhaps the negative criticism of the middle school programs can be corrected and we will truly see 'unique' programs for students at a 'unique' stage of development." (#29-p.9) (#38-p.10)

Criterion for Success Not Grade Placement

17. "Success in ninth grade does not rest so much with its placement as it does with program of instruction and instructional staff involved." (#30-p.12-13) There is no "advantage to the child to move him to senior high school level."

Lack of Commitment

18. "One important reason needs to be considered when we talk of the failure of the transition from junior high school to middle school: It is the lack of total commitment on the part of those persons who work most closely with the program." (#33-p.242)

19. "Beyond these concepts (middle school), certain skills need to be developed within the staff: (a) diagnosis of learning, (b) approaches to independent study, (c) skills inherent in large- and small-group instruction that are part of team teaching and facets of interdisciplinary team teaching, (d) concepts and skills that are needed to develop a core-type approach to education, (e) the various skills necessary to allow for nongradedness, (f) skills involved with individualized instruction, and (g) skills of evaluation." (#33-p.244)

Teachers
Need
Reorientation

"Everyone should understand what goes into the makeup of a middle school and how it is to function for the child." (Ibid)
"Transition cannot occur unless the staff is committed totally to the concepts of the middle school." (Ibid) (#41-p.332) (#49-p.114)

Teachers Make
the School
"Retreads"
Make Poor
Teachers

20. "Most critical over the years has been the 'retread' approach to staffing schools for emerging adolescents." (#34-p.211) (#45-p.36) (#46-p.214) (#47-p.143) (#48-p.21)

M.S. Might
Be Contribut-
ing to an
Already
Troublesome
Situation

21. "It is pointed out that earlier biological maturation has not been adequately documented and that, regardless, it does not necessarily bring with it the intellectual, social, and psychological maturity necessary to handle most middle school programs." (#35-p.16)

M.S. Has Swung
from One Philo-
sophic Posi-
tion to
Another. Has
Not Settled
On A Philo-
sophic Posi-
tion Yet

22. "The Middle School has swung in a pendulum-like fashion from one philosophic extreme to another--behaviorist to humanist. Neither of these positions has produced an effective learning program for students." (#39-p.11) The swing currently is to the traditional pattern of the more difficult the program, the greater student achievement--a fallacious posture. (#39-p.11-12) (#40-p.63)

No Valid System to Evaluate Program

23. "No . . . appropriate system of evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the program." (#38-p.14) (#39-p.10)

Community Relations & Communications. M.S. at Crossroads

24. Parents still think "excellence should be of primary importance--more so than meeting early adolescent needs. Middle schools at the crossroads." (#38-p.15)

Lacks Mutual Agreement On Organizational Plan. Gap Between Philosophy and Fact

25. "It is much too early to abstract a plan of organization for the middle school upon which educators would agree. For this reason it remains up to the educators, administrators, and others in the schools to plan their organizations carefully and to be sensitive to feedback and change." (#39-p.13) (#40-p.62) (#40-p.63) (#42-p.3-14)

Dearth of Research to Prove Validity of M.S.

26. "Research specifically related to middle schools as defined by the authors is extremely limited. There has been little effort on the part of individuals, school systems, or outside agencies to evaluate the middle school. In most cases the research leaves unanswered the question of whether the middle school is providing a better education for its students than is received by comparable students in the junior high school." (#43-p.172) (#44-p.36) (#51-p.421-422)

Change In Name Only?

27. "There needs to be more middle schools in the new sense of the term: Adjustment of the curriculum to meet the needs of the transescent. Just changing the titles of schools from 'junior high school' to 'middle school' is insufficient for the education of transescent students. The actual practice of constructing new learning situations for middle school grades needs extensive implementation." (#48-p.71) (#49-p.32-33)

28. "Subject-by-subject teaching with overriding emphasis on content"--leading to:

What Causes
the M.S. to
Be Ineffect-
ive?

"The lack of middle school personnel who possess the abilities and talents for working with the early adolescent."

"Inflexible program schedule."

"Inflexible grouping."

"The thwarting of any attempts to use individualization of instruction."

"Lack of independent study opportunities."

"The impedance of multifaceted approach to developing an evaluation program." (#50-p.23-25)

29. "Seldom is anything suggested regarding curriculum development. Of all the changes advocated for the middle school, the greatest

Curriculum
Change: The
Middle School
Vacuum.
Changes Made
Have Been
Chiefly Admin-
istrative &
Cosmetic.

vacuum exists in the area of appropriate curriculum development.

Changes that have been made in middle schools are those instituted

with the least administrative effort. Currently the practice is to

continue curriculum programs as they existed in the elementary fifth

and sixth grades and the junior high school seventh and eighth grades

and to incorporate these programs into a middle school setting."

(#56-p.225)

Lacks Suit-
able Cur-
riculum

30. "The middle school movement is in need of an in-depth, well-

funded project to produce a suitable curriculum." (#56-p.226)

(#66-p.25) (#78-p.71)

Potential
Harm to
the Ele-
mentary
School

31. "Those men who embark on careers in the elementary school

tend to gravitate toward the upper years with a preponderance of them

teaching in the fifth and sixth grades of the graded school. If the

elementary school loses both fifth and sixth grades, one can assume

their teachers will be 'lost' to the middle school. Unless more men can be recruited for what remains of the elementary schools, the education of children may suffer. This potential loss of male teachers may be one factor to be answered: What effects will these newer organizations have upon what remains of the elementary school? The result will be almost a 100 percent matriarchal elementary school." (#57-p.41)

Rejection of
Jr. H.S. W/O
Appropriate
Alternatives.
Bandwagon?

32. "Middle Schools across the nation have succeeded, for the most part, in rejecting inappropriate activities. Few, however, have come up with appropriate alternatives." (#65-p.42) "A major problem of team teaching in many middle schools has been the failure to identify specifically and completely those things that team teaching can accomplish." (Ibid) (#68-p.217) (#76-p.26) (#75-p.185) (#83-p.40-44) (#84-p.17) (#84-p.19) (#88-p.18) (#90-p.18) (#94-p.289)

Discipline
Problems

33. "The lack of effective leadership, poor teacher organization, the lack of basic operational principles, and failure to recognize characteristics of potentially disruptive students." (#63-p.86-89)

Cross
Between
Elementary
and High
School

34. "One shared characteristic of the middle school is an attempt to combine the best features of the self-contained elementary school with the best features of the specialization of the secondary schools. Sometimes the plan breaks down and preserves just those features of the status quo--overisolation and extreme departmentalization--that gave impetus to the middle school in the first place." (#65-p.41)

"Middle schools have, for the most part, rejected inappropriate activities. Few, however, have come up with appropriate activities--with the initiation of appropriate preadolescent activities." (Ibid)

Lacks Own
Identity

35. "Whether the middle school will attempt to emulate the high school, as the traditional junior high school has done, or whether it will establish its own identity remains to be seen. Perhaps as recent studies show, it is already too late for the second of these two alternatives to occur." (#69-p.43-44) (#70-p.244) (#77-p.21,23) (#81-p.231) (#89-p.5) (#94-p.289)

Definite Phil-
osophy Required
& Specific
Teacher
Preparation

36. "The definition and philosophy of the middle school has not yet been firmly established. No accepted teacher preparation programs fully developed." (#74-p.27) (80-editorial) (#94-p.289) (#94-p.292)

Communica-
tion Break-
downs

37. "Communications breakdowns were very obvious. These communications breakdowns manifested themselves at virtually all levels: staff, plant administrators, district office, and school board." (#82-p.66)

SUMMARY

1. "Since Sputnik, American education has undergone many changes--some desirable and some not. Confronted with pressures to integrate, to accelerate, to harden the curriculum, and to automate instruction, will the new middle school better serve the needs of children and early adolescents? Each school system should thoroughly examine the needs of children and youth from nursery through high school. Then, after developing an N-12 sequential curriculum, they can select the organization pattern that seems best for their students." (#57-p.41)

2. "Social skills play an integral part in the life of an individual. The 'ability to get along' is consistently cited as one of the most important factors in determining success. Conversely, interpersonal conflicts are commonly seen as perpetrators of failure. Social skills are not inherited--they must be learned by the individual. Yet, too often social-skills development occurs through trial and error, casual life experiences, and is too frequently the result of chance social encounters and challenges. Under such learning conditions, the individual's social skills development may lack comprehensiveness and cohesiveness. Thus, it remains for the social institution of the school--particularly the middle school (junior high school)--to create an educational environment conducive to the progressive development of social skills by the emerging adolescent. Whether environment is restrictive or permissive, structured or spontaneous, remedial or advanced, reinforcement of social-skills development is essential to effect positive and permanent behavioral changes. Through recognition and renewal, adolescents can attain a mode of social behavior beneficial to both themselves and society, thereby increasingly fulfilling their human potential." (#64-p.11)

This is the great challenge to educators of the transescent--middle school or junior high school!

3. Chart - Contrasts: Junior High School vs. Middle School

Junior High Emphasizes:

A program that is subject-centered
Acquiring a body of information
Skill and concept mastery
Interstudent competition
Conformance to the teacher-made lesson plan
Student learning is the responsibility of the teacher
Control by the teacher
A six-period day
A schedule administratively constructed
Standard classrooms
One teacher per class
All students at the same place at the same time; textbook approach

Middle School Emphasizes:

A program that is child-centered
Learning how to learn
Creative exploration
A belief in oneself
Skilled guidance for student self-direction
Students assuming responsibility for their own learning
Student independence
A flexible schedule
Scheduling involving student planning
Variable group size
Use of team teaching
Students learning at different rates--self-pacing

4. One of the great problems common to the success of the junior high school and middle school alike has been the absence of leadership and assistance in preparing certified personnel for the transient years. One of the chief concerns of teachers, students, and parents alike is that traditionally schools in the middle year have been staffed by personnel who have not been specifically prepared to work with youth in this age range.

"Preparing professional educators to work with emerging adolescents is the phase of the teacher education continuum which has suffered most from reaction, resulting in confusion, widespread misunderstanding, and simple but serious lack of commitment from the profession. Now, however, it seems that a consensus has been reached about both the characteristics of the teachers

who are most effective and the components of the program which are most likely to produce these professionals. More than a dozen such programs now functioning are amazingly in tune with the literature guidelines.

"Time seems to be the major factor involved in proving these programs, but inservice staff development and state certification patterns are far from what they need to be. Individuals and professional associations at the state and national levels must continue to press for needed changes in these areas. There lies the challenge for the future of the middle school movement." (#98-p.16)

5. In the interest of stating a point of view regarding the controversy of junior high school versus middle school, one document, The Rationale of the Middle School, by Mildred McQueen is quoted in full as part of this summary:

The junior high school was once hailed as the best plan of school organization for youngsters from late childhood to early adolescence. Now many educators believe that the middle school should replace this plan, for it can better meet the needs of this age group.

Boys and girls from 10 to 14 are in that transition period between childhood and adolescence, when they are trying to learn to cope with bodily changes, to exercise a new way of intellectual functioning, and to become persons in their own right. Youngsters in this age group are at a variety of levels in social, physical, and intellectual development; and their interests are widely diverse. They are not well equipped to profit from structured learning experiences. They need a good deal of individual work and guidance, as well as patience and understanding. The middle school is specifically designed, say its proponents, to create a situation in which each pupil can develop his own potential in an atmosphere free from competitive and other pressures.

The term, "middle school," is not just another label for a junior high school. The middle school is, in effect, a completely new way of educating youngsters between the primary and high school years.

The middle school philosophy involves changes in the roles of teachers and learners and in the learning environment. The teacher is a manager of learning and a guide for students instead of a dispenser of knowledge. The learner is

more independent, and the learning environment is more flexible with open spaces and learning labs. The middle school also uses new kinds of evaluative techniques and makes better use of resources.

A middle school may combine grade levels in various ways--5-8, 6-9, 6-8, 4-7, and even 7-9--the range most often associated with the junior high school. Of course there are also various combinations of grades in the junior high; but the traditional junior high school is made up of grades seven, eight, and nine. No matter what combination of grades is included in a junior high school, however, proponents of the middle school maintain that the junior high program is designed for adolescents and is not suitable for youngsters who are between childhood and adolescence.

Criticism of Junior High. Middle school advocates offer a variety of reasons why the junior high school is not effective. Some charge that its original goals have been forfeited in order to solve administrative problems such as overcrowding and that its goals were not well planned in the first place but developed as an expedient to correct weaknesses in the 8-4 plan. Others say it has become a different institution from the one originally planned, and still others say that we now have the knowledge about the preadolescent and early adolescent that was unknown when the junior high school plan was made. The junior high school program is usually said to be more suitable for older students than for younger ones.

The most-often-heard criticism of the junior high school is that it is merely a miniature copy of the high school, with a program which is not specifically designed and relevant for the in-between youngster. The junior high school program focuses on what will happen later to the student and not on the kinds of experiences which will meet his needs during the period of preadolescence--self-dependent learning emphasis, inquiry emphasis, and treatment of the three major areas of learning: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. The program is often rigid and departmentalized with too much fragmentation, and it is too drastic and abrupt a change from the self-contained classroom of the elementary school. Another serious problem is the emphasis on marching bands, cheerleaders, and interscholastic sports for a few students combined with neglect of suitable health and physical fitness programs for all students. Still another incorrect approach cited is the emphasis on vocational guidance for only the lower academic achievers, when all students need orientation to the world of work.

Fresh Approach. Proponents of middle schools say we should take a fresh approach toward the education of youngsters between childhood and adolescence. Most middle school educators agree on the following general goals: The middle school should provide individualization of curriculum and instruction; promote continuous progress through and smooth articulation between phases of the educational program; and

present a balanced program of exploratory experiences, activities, and services such as guidance for personal growth and the development of values. In making plans for a middle school, several important areas must be considered:

a. Organization plan. A cooperative interdisciplinary team pattern is effective in middle schools. Schools can use a team of four members, each with special competence in one of the four basic curriculum areas. Each member is responsible for planning the program of his four-base group and for initially counseling individual students. Teaming enables each teacher to become close to every youngster, and this leads to understanding and confidence.

b. Balanced curriculum. A balanced curriculum with an interdisciplinary approach should focus not only on knowledge but also on the personal development of the student and continuation of learning skills. Fields of knowledge which are usually included are: language arts, social studies, science, and mathematics, with provision for fine and practical arts on an exploratory basis.

c. Individualization and personal development. There should be curriculum individualization and enough guidance and counseling to assure a balance of experiences in accordance with individual needs. Independent study, small-group work in instructional centers, and other projects that lead to self-direction should be included. One especially critical area of personal development is health and physical education. The pupil must have physical activities of a recreational nature to help him develop coordination and skill.

d. Exploratory experiences. Elective courses--usually short-term rather than long-term--and informal clubs will provide opportunities for students to develop special interests and abilities. Some exploration of the world of work should be part of the middle school years. In an informal way children can explore how occupations use knowledge and how they are related to abilities. They can also investigate the way goods and services are produced and the makeup of the labor force.

e. Teachers. An important trait for teachers in the middle school is skill in the art of listening. Of course, explanations and directions are needed; but when a teacher listens to a child, he learns to understand the pupil's feelings and his world. Teachers must not only measure up scholastically but must also be able to see each student as an individual and really want to help him make the most of himself.

f. Flexibility. The staff and the schedule need to be flexible in order to accommodate a wide range of individual differences. It will give the preadolescent a chance to relate his studies to the world around him. Flexibility is also needed for experimentation so that new methods and materials can be tried and for innovation in evaluation techniques.

g. Physical facilities. Physical arrangements can help provide some of the flexibility needed. Often classrooms can be arranged in clusters with movable walls so that the partitions can be folded back to make one large classroom. Middle school students need places where they can develop social as well as intellectual interests and skills and be themselves, so a student commons with warm colors and inviting spaces is important. The middle school must also have a small-group or tutorial space, and each student should have a study space of his own. The learning center should be more than just a library or media center so that a wide variety of activities can take place.

Survey of Growth. Recent surveys show that the middle school is becoming increasingly popular. During the 1965-66 school year there were 499 middle schools operating in 29 states. By 1967-68, however, a total of 1,101 middle schools were operating in 37 of the 50 states. Another survey conducted for the 1968-69 school year to update this information found 1,946 middle schools operating in 38 states. Most popular among the middle-school patterns were the 7-8 grouping, with the 6-8 grouping second in popularity. Texas was by far the leader in the middle school movement with 430 schools or 22 percent of the total number of schools operating in the 38 states.

Most middle schools in the survey actually showed little concern for middle school rationales as outlined by the proponents of the plan and are middle schools only by name and grade level. Although their reported goal was to remedy the weaknesses of the junior high school, they nevertheless had departmentalized programs, interscholastic athletics, and similar features characteristic of the junior high. Few schools used team teaching, large- or small-group instruction, or other procedures for individualization. Some 20 percent did provide scheduled time for independent study, but few had individually planned programs of independent study at any grade level. Only a small number of schools offered extensive exploratory electives. Less than 5 percent used any type of modular scheduling, and nearly 90 percent used a traditional marking system. In effect, these schools are doing little more than changing the name from junior high to middle school or intermediate school when they should be trying to answer the question of how to provide better educational programs for preadolescents.

The emphasis and spirit of the middle school program are much more important than the new name. The hope is to send each student off confident that he can learn and with the knowledge that learning is really worthwhile.

6. The research "findings indicate little evidence by which to evaluate middle school education. A systematic approach emphasizing qualities distinctive to middle school education is greatly needed." (#101-p.421)

7. Educational Research Service has prepared an exhaustive summary of the research dealing with the middle school. A bibliography of some 166 studies is a part of the report. This document (#100), which is part of the material of this report, also includes a summary detailing the pros and cons of middle school versus junior high school. On page 31 of this digest it states: "While existing research does not strongly support the argument that the middle school has realized its full potential, neither does it clearly indicate that the middle school is patently inferior to other more traditional types of schools for pre- and early adolescents." (#100-p.31)

8. More research is urgent if the middle school is to succeed, and emphasis should be changed from conflict with the junior high school. In Priorities for Research in Middle School Education Gordon, Johnston, Markle, and Strahan state: "Applied research related to practices and procedures that result in more effectively educating middle school students should be emphasized. National Middle School Association members are interested in what 'works with students' and 'how to do it.' There is less concern about comparisons of junior high schools and middle schools. Apparently Wiles and Thomason's (1975) suggestion to study the qualities or practices of middle schooling in an attempt to determine those which have a beneficial impact on students is supported by practitioners in the field. Theoretical research, especially in the area of psychological and physiological development and its impact upon learning, may be useful. The middle school movement, however, has apparently reached the point where empirical investigations of its practices are needed. Curriculum development and evaluation, instructional techniques, staffing procedures, and teacher training are areas of potentially useful middle school research." (#54-p.17)

9. This controversy should revolve more around issues of functions rather than organization. What is the significance and meaning of functions

relative to the junior high/middle school? "In educational thought, the maxim is accepted that the basic instrument from which a given school develops and operates is its philosophy. A philosophy is always stated in terms which are broad and in language which is general and non-technical. While a known philosophy provides the all-important foundation for an institution's development, it does not provide the framework around which the body of the institution will be constructed. Specific concepts giving dimension are required. Among these for the junior high/middle school are the functions which give direction to the development of many facets of the school's endeavor--e.g., the character of its administrative structure; the design, content, and objectives of the curriculum; instructional methods; pupil services rendered; and the nature of the evaluation program. Inherent within all these must be the goals sought, goals which reflect the needs of both the individual students to be served and the society into which they are being initiated.

"Thus, in the literature of the junior high/middle school, the terms, 'goal' and 'function,' figure prominently. While the identified goals of a school represent its ultimate aims, its functions are the comprehensive responsibilities which it must assume to provide those conditions which will make possible the achievement of such goals. This Study-Report presumes to deal not with goals of early adolescent education, but rather with the responsibilities which reside with the junior high/middle school and the processes by which selected schools fulfill these responsibilities.

"After more than six decades of development, the institutionalization of early adolescent education is neither a universally adopted concept nor is it understood. It remains yet a 'movement'; and, as with all movements, it continues to be a point of controversy. Much misunderstanding exists with respect to its intended character and purposes. Additional questions have arisen in the past few years as a consequence of divisions within the

Early Adolescent Education Movement. Confusion exists over the use of different names for schools at this level of education, such usage often giving rise to claims of difference when in fact none exists. As the literature reveals, assaults against schools--by whatever name--which have been designed to meet the unique educational needs of early adolescent youth, are seldom the consequence of dissatisfaction with their stated purposes or responsibilities; i.e., functions, but rather with their presumed purposes." (#92-p.iv-v)

10. "In the final analysis, however, the greatest contribution of the junior high school movement has not been a specific but a spirit--the spirit of experimentation it brought to secondary education. Reorganization meant opportunity to try things out in a new school which was less handicapped by precedent and tradition. Despite the dominance of the senior high school, the junior high school has been a testing ground for such new approaches as the core curriculum.

"The con side of the balance sheet includes the continuing unfortunate tendency to mimic the senior high school. The ninth grade is hardly distinguishable from a senior high ninth grade. The dearth of teachers specifically trained for work with young adolescents imposes a real obstacle to practice. The inadequate, leftover facilities often provided for junior high schools handicap programs.

"The absence of adequate standards, regulations, and policies at the local and state levels hinders the proper development of junior high school education. The lack of prestige accorded education at this level is damaging. The very name of this intermediate institution reflects its all-too-often subordinate position." (#93-p.227)

"If the junior high schools are replaced by middle schools, it may be because of the failure of supporters of the junior high school to build a distinctive institution. But it depends, also, on what supporters of junior

high school education actually do in their own schools and in state and university relationships. The success or failures of junior high school teachers and administrators in developing a distinctive junior high school program of education will contribute to choosing the road ahead--junior high school or middle school--for new forms of organization grow out of the power of new forces. New forms of organization also grow out of the failures of old forces." (#93-p.231)

11. "Some Recommendations. Creative learning environments and experiences that respond to these developmental principles, following the recommendations listed below, will make education for the young adolescent easier on everyone.

"a. Differentiate both instruction and evaluative criteria. Avoid establishing criteria or instructional practices which require all students, widely distributed over the developmental spectrum, to achieve at the same level. Attend especially to the developmental prerequisites for any planned activity, and vary the level of developmental maturity required for participation.

"b. Allow students the security of group membership. To this end, minimize efforts to make the child 'conspicuous' by requiring constant competition with other students. Allow the student to 'submerge' himself in the group from time to time, and evaluate both individual achievements and contributions to group activity.

"c. Build into the curriculum the opportunity for students to examine and evaluate various ethical and moral positions. Employ the techniques of values clarification, moral reasoning, and law-related education to investigate the effectiveness of various adult roles and decisions.

"d. Contribute to the students' feelings of self-worth. Provide a variety of avenues through which students can demonstrate achievement

and be awarded recognition. Respect the youngster's privacy by not requiring participation in activities which increase conspicuousness (such as group showers, dance classes, chorus, and rope climbing).

"e. Allow students to exert some measure of control over their own environment. Have them participate in the establishment of standards for classroom conduct and the planning of educational experiences. Provide students with choices within a controlled and secure structure.

"f. Teach the students some basic principles of human development. Allow them to discover that their perceived 'abnormalities' are generally quite 'normal' and quite temporary.

"g. Create a sense of adventure through the use of inquiry techniques and simulations. The young adolescent is active in every sense of the word. Passive teaching strategies are generally inappropriate for this age student.

"h. In exploring issues that are of concern to the young adolescent, provide adequate psychic distance so that the student is not threatened by participation. Create calm environments where students can analyze emotional situations in the absence of stress and compare child-like with adult-like emotional behavior.

"i. Do not deprive students of symbols of belonging and do not make light of those symbols. Often student attachment to certain rituals represents their commitment to a peer group. In short, their rituals are as important to them as ours are to us.

"j. Introduce students to recreational and intellectual pursuits that 'carry over' into adult life, especially those related to content instruction. For example, on a science field trip, teach some wilderness camping skills.

"k. Allow students time to be alone. Young adolescents need uninterrupted time to reflect on the changes they are experiencing.

Do not expect every child to participate in every activity all day long." (#102-p.79-80)

12. Research pinpointing the issues of this report have been dealt with exhaustively by authorities in the field. One of the best presentations was made by Dr. Thomas Gatewood at the annual meeting of the North Central Association in Chicago. Because it summarizes the studies of this writer, it is included in its entirety with the support documents of this report. (See #53)

After all the evidence is in, the conclusions are best stated by Vars in this report: "Any shake-up of an established pattern provides an excellent opportunity to make fundamental improvements. Whether we regard the change from the junior high to the middle school as a revolution, a reformation, or a colossal mistake, let us seize this golden opportunity to make a fresh approach toward the goals we have always held for schools for young adolescents, however they are organized and whatever they are called." (#53-p.273)

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